

BOULDER DAM

National Recreational Area - Arizona - Nevada



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR

Harold L. Ickes, *Secretary*



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Newton B. Drury, *Director*

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Through the Grand
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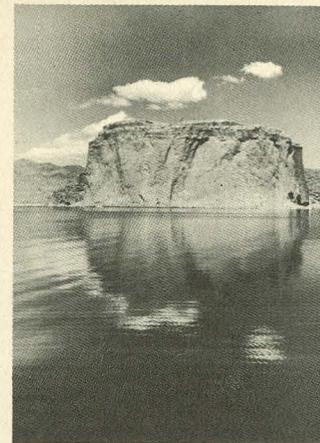
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Historic Events

- 1539 Francisco de Ulloa discovered the mouth of the Colorado River.
- 1857 Capt. George A. Johnson explored the Colorado River, using the Steamship "General Jessup." (Some authorities credit him with reaching the mouth of the Virgin River.)
- 1857 Lieut. J. C. Ives explored the Colorado River, using the Steamship "Explorer," reaching the mouth of Las Vegas Wash.
- 1868-69 and 1870-71 Maj. J. W. Powell and parties explored the Colorado River, making two successful trips through the Grand Canyon by boat.
- 1901 Water from Colorado River first used to irrigate lands in the Imperial Valley.
- 1922 Colorado River Seven States Compact drawn up at Santa Fe, N. Mex.
- 1928 Boulder Dam Project Act approved by President Hoover.
- 1931 Actual construction of Boulder Dam was started.
- 1935 Boulder Dam dedicated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
- 1936 Boulder Dam National Recreational Area created by interbureau agreement between National Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation and approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

OPEN
ALL
YEAR



*Boulder
Dam*
NATIONAL
RECREATIONAL AREA
ARIZONA-NEVADA

THE TEMPLE

THE Boulder Dam National Recreational Area was established on October 13, 1936, when the Secretary of the Interior gave his written approval to an interbureau agreement drawn up between the National Park Service and the Bureau of Reclamation, which had built Boulder Dam. Under this agreement, the Bureau of Reclamation administers the dam itself and Boulder City, while all recreational plans, developments, and facilities in the area are supervised by the National Park Service. The area includes some 2,655 square miles. It joins Grand Canyon National Monument on the east and follows the course of the Colorado River in northwestern Arizona and southeastern Nevada, extending as far south as the old mining town of Searchlight, Nev.

The central feature of this new playground area is Lake Mead, named after the late Dr. Elwood Mead, who was Commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation during the construction of Boulder Dam. Lake Mead, now wide

and open, now narrow between canyon walls, winds for 115 navigable miles from Boulder Dam eastward, into the Grand Canyon itself, a distance of 39 miles, and extends an arm more than 30 miles north up the Virgin River valley. At its highest level Lake Mead has a shore line of 550 miles, a depth of 589 feet, and contains 33,500,000 acre feet of water, the largest artificial lake in the world. The muddy Colorado River, as it enters the lake, drops its load of silt to the bottom. As a result, the lake waters are a vivid unbelievable blue in a land of strangely colored desert mountains—tan, brown, red, lavender, purple—some stark and somber piles of rock, others soft-looking, subdued mountains, starved for water, that seem to reach down into the lake, rather than to climb up out of it.

Principal recreational developments for the present are located at three points on Lake Mead, including one at Hemenway Wash in the west near Boulder City; one near Overton on the Virgin River arm of the lake; and one

at Pierce Ferry at the western entrance to the Grand Canyon. Additional development areas are being prepared at strategic points as they are needed. The developments planned at the three sites mentioned, above include: lodge and cabin accommodations, public campgrounds, boating facilities, swimming and beach facilities, and the accompanying landscaping and utilities installation.

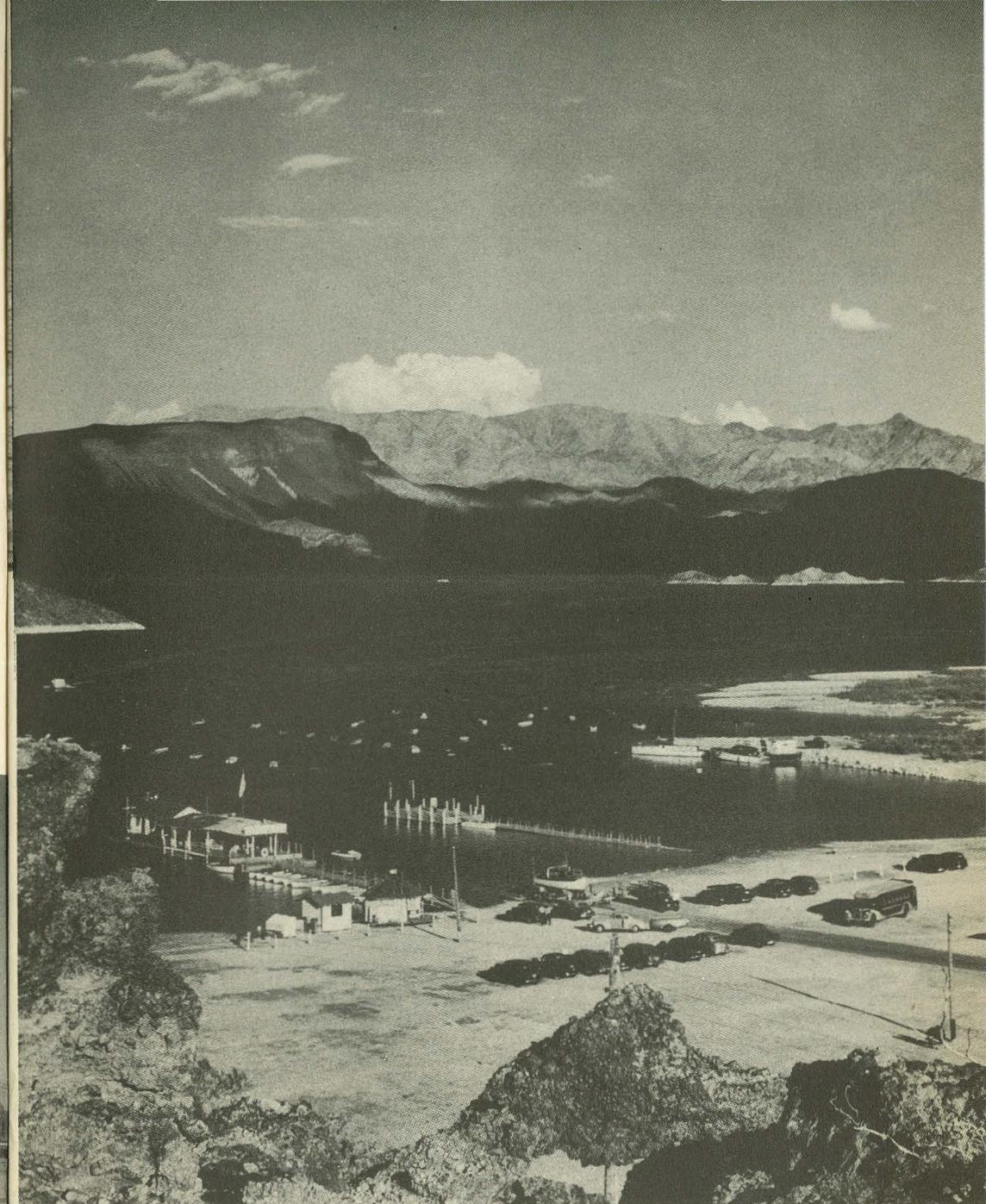
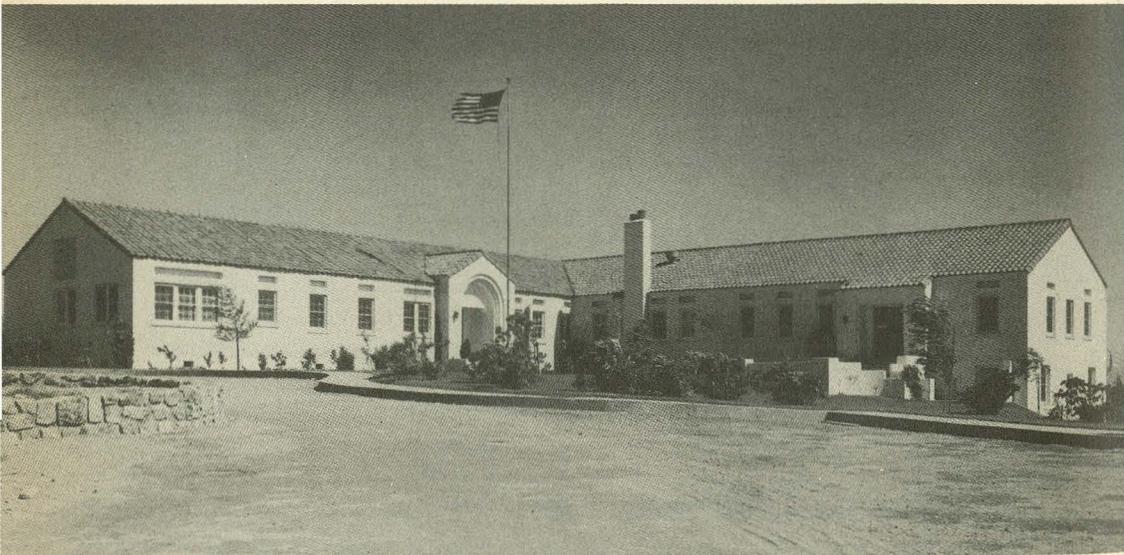
The Boulder Dam National Recreational Area is an all-year playground. Warm weather may be expected from June 1 to September 15, but, with the dry air, the heat is not unduly oppressive. Winter temperatures rarely reach freezing, day temperatures during the winter months varying between 50 and 70 degrees. Spring and fall weather is ideal, with pleasant warm days and cool invigorating nights.

GEOLOGIC FEATURES

The region around Lake Mead is an area which has fascinated the geologist ever since the time of Major Powell's thrilling explorations down the Colorado River by rowboat between 1868 and 1871. It is an area that has been laid open by the erosion of the Colorado River and its drainage system, vividly exposing the character and position of the rock formations that lie beneath the earth's surface. In the eastern part of Boulder Dam National Recreational Area the western portion of the Grand Canyon of the Colorado is accessible by boat. As viewed from Lake Mead the colorful towering cliffs of the canyon walls offer a picture spectacular beyond belief. Layer upon layer of limestone and shale deposited by prehistoric seas (Paleozoic) on an ancient land surface of granite (Archeozoic)

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE HEADQUARTERS BUILDING AT BOULDER CITY, NEVADA.

Grant photo



Allwine photo

BOAT HARBOR WHERE VISITORS START ON VARIOUS TRIPS ON LAKE MEAD.

form the sides of this gorge which is 4,000 to 6,000 feet deep.

At Pierce Ferry, Ariz., the Grand Wash Cliffs, like a gigantic step, mark the western termination of the high plateaus through which the Colorado River has carved the Grand Canyon. From a distance these cliffs appear as an unbroken vertical wall 4,000 feet high but upon closer examination they are found to be rugged, step-like slopes whose upper edges are often sharply contorted.

West of the Grand Wash Cliffs one enters a region where surface features contrast sharply with nearly level plateaus to the east. Here one sees broad valleys between high but narrow north-south trending mountain ranges. Across these broad valleys Lake Mead takes a meandering course and assumes an irregular shore line indented by numerous coves and narrow inlets. At places promontories and monoliths such as Napoleon's Tomb or The Temple rise precipitously above the lake level. Elsewhere rocks resembling mushrooms, sphinxes, and phantom ships are common features brought about by the erosion of the soft clays and silts (upper Tertiary) which were deposited in the broad valleys before the beginning of the Colorado River. Lavas appearing as dark bands in the lighter colored rocks, or as caps covering mesas, occur at numerous places along the shore.

Through the mountain ranges which separate these broad valleys, Lake Mead follows narrow but deep gorges that were cut by the Colorado River into rock formations whose individual layers often are steeply tilted. Several of these gorges are of outstanding beauty, show-

ing a wealth of color with grey, yellow, and tawny red predominating.

A thickness of over 18,000 feet of sediments has been deposited to form the sedimentary rocks that are exposed in Boulder Dam National Recreational Area. This tremendous thickness of sediments, laid down by ancient seas, rivers, and lakes, represents practically every division of the geological time table.

Many of the sedimentary layers (Paleozoic) which occur in the walls of Grand Canyon contain fossil shells in such abundance that the seas in which these animals lived must have been teeming with life. At other localities immediately north of Lake Mead, the sediments (Mesozoic) contain ancient fossil trees of enormous size. In this same series of rocks the remains of large amphibians and reptiles also have been found. During the great ice age (Pleistocene) mammoths, camels, ground sloths, and associated mammals were common inhabitants of the area as shown by the great number of bones that have been collected.

INDIAN BACKGROUND

The region now included within the Boulder Dam National Recreational Area has been almost continuously inhabited by man for approximately 2,000 years. In arid regions such as this the activities of these prehistoric Indian inhabitants naturally centered around the water courses. As many of these sites along the Colorado and Virgin Rivers were in the path of the waters of the Colorado River backing up behind Boulder Dam, it was necessary to conduct a careful survey of this region in



FISHING IS ONE OF THE MAJOR SPORTS.

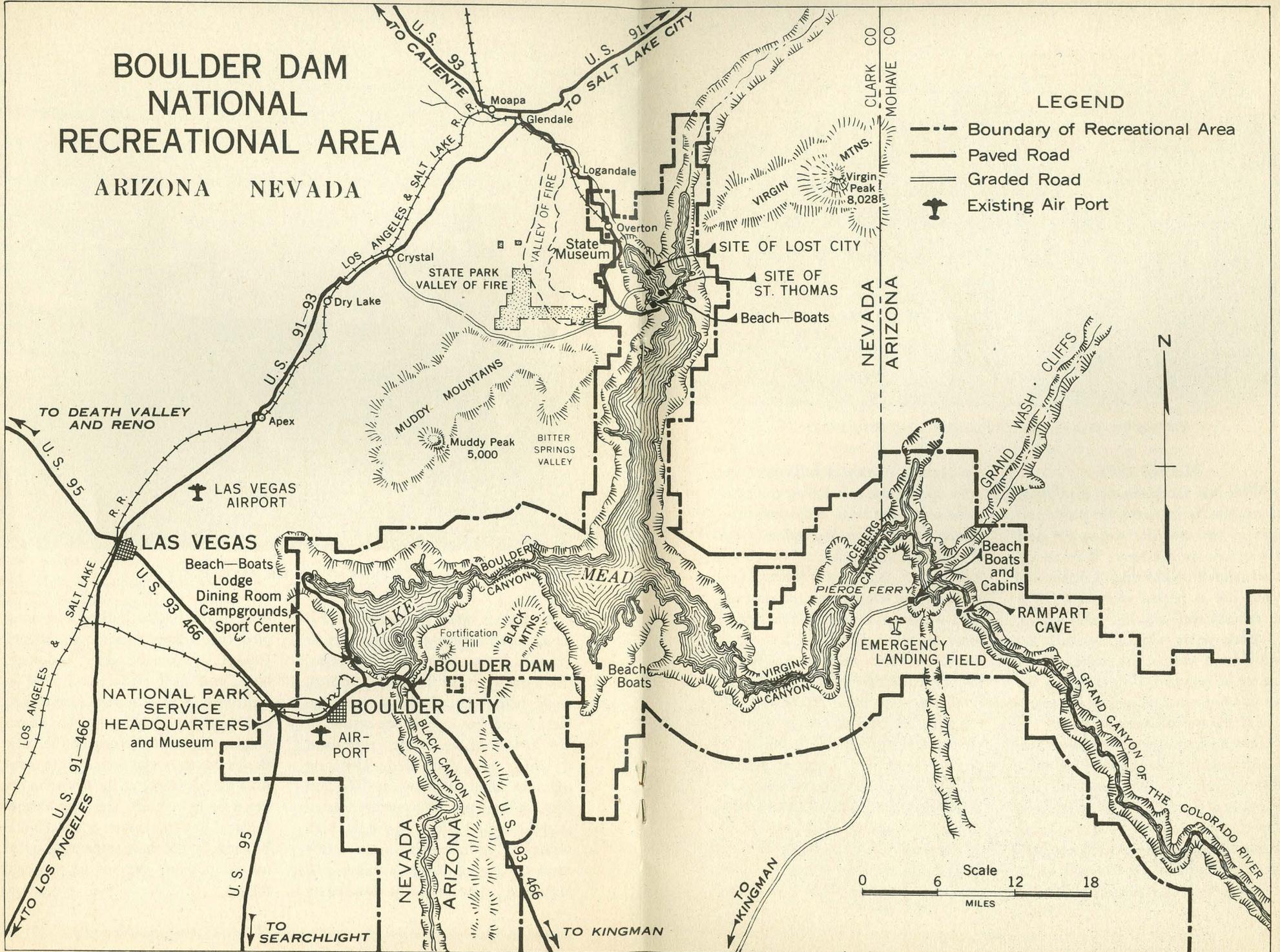
Belknap photo

order that as much as possible of this almost irreplaceable evidence might be salvaged before being lost forever beneath the waters of this largest of man-made lakes. Hundreds of campsites were found, but in only one section of the area have extensive, permanent dwellings been discovered. These are the ruins popularly known as "The Lost City," a large group of pueblos located in the Moapa Valley. Above the high water level of Lake Mead in the nearby town of Overton, Nev., a museum of archeology now tells the fascinating

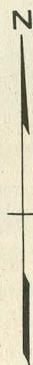
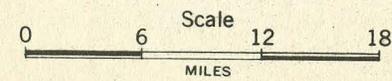
story of the Pueblo Indians who occupied this village from about 800 to 1200 A. D. From the pottery and stone, bone, and shell artifacts collected in rock shelters, from scattered campsites, and from the pueblo ruins, the archeologist has learned much of the early Basket Makers, who occupied this area from the beginning of the Christian era down to 800 A. D., the later Pueblo Indians, and the more recent Paiute, Walapai, and Mohave Indians, who still inhabit outlying sections of this arid region.

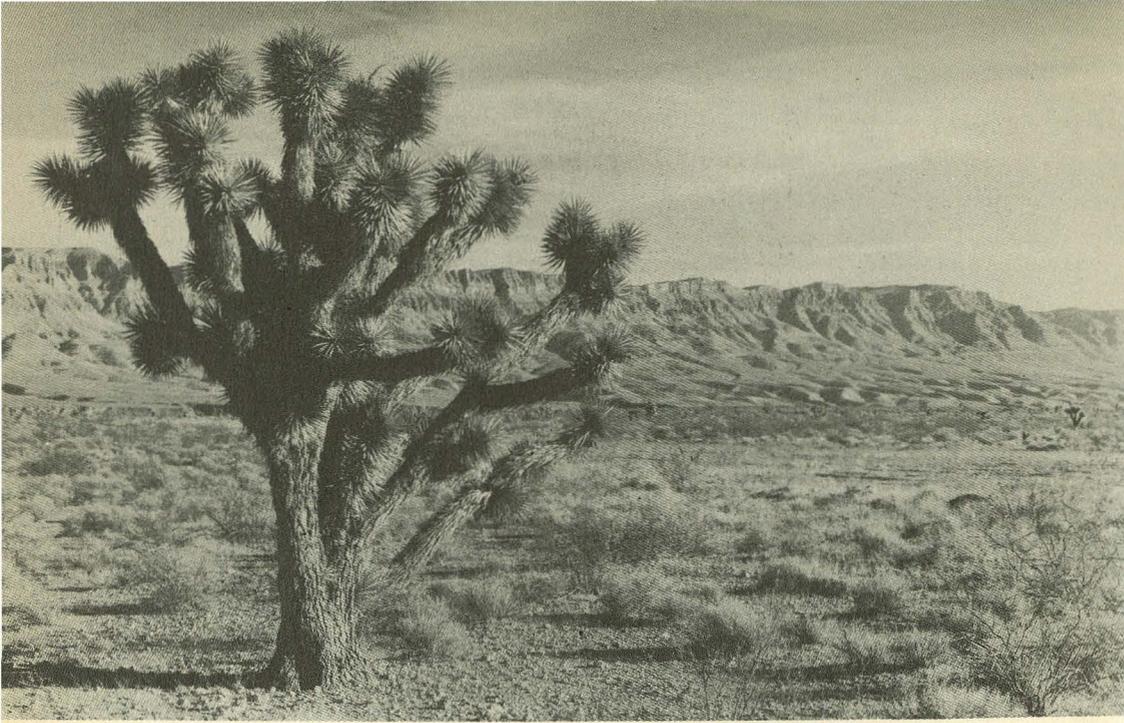
BOULDER DAM NATIONAL RECREATIONAL AREA

ARIZONA NEVADA



- LEGEND**
- Boundary of Recreational Area
 - Paved Road
 - == Graded Road
 - ✈ Existing Air Port





THE JOSHUA TREE GROWS ABUNDANTLY IN THIS SECTION.

Belknap photo

PLANT LIFE

With the exception of the higher plateaus to the eastward, the major portion of the area lies within the arid lower Sonoran life zone. With an annual rainfall of less than 5 inches, the plant life is highly specialized. The perennials send out vast root systems to obtain water, while the annuals develop from seed to mature plant in a matter of only a few days during the times when sporadic rains make a limited amount of moisture available.

Few flowering plants are found in blossom during the summer, but from February until June there is an endless procession of flowers on the arid mountain slopes and in the gravelly washes. As might be expected, the various species of cacti are the most colorful, with the beavertail cactus affording

the greatest display of brilliance. But other species also splash their color patterns across the area. Solid masses of yellow, visible for great distances, speak eloquently of the presence of the golden hills, while asters, desert chicory, wild heliotrope, desert mallow, and sand verbena bloom profusely by the side of some of their smaller and less showy neighbors. Somewhat higher up on the desert slopes the long whip-like ocotillo with its vivid red flowers vies for attention with the white flowered yucca. And, as a climax to this floral display, the spring-fed hanging gardens of the lower Grand Canyon region offer a vast profusion of scarlet-hued monkey flowers and yellow columbines.

There are few trees in the area except along the river courses and on the higher plateaus to the east. Along

the Colorado and Virgin Rivers the cottonwood grows in scattered groves, with desert willow, mesquite, and cat-claw occupying the remainder of the available terrain. Tamarix and arrowwood grow in dense jungles wherever they can find a foothold in the moist river banks, and are beginning to spread along the shores of Lake Mead. One of the largest Joshua tree forests in the Southwest is also found on and adjoining the area. The high plateaus to the eastward, such as the Shivwits and Hualpai, contain pinyon pine and juniper forest, with a number of yellow pines in the higher regions of the Shivwits.

ANIMAL LIFE

Boulder Dam National Recreational Area has listed between 40 and 50 different species of mammals that are found within its boundaries. The Nelson bighorn, or desert bighorn, is found in all the larger canyons and on the higher mountains throughout the area.

This animal is not abundant but is one of the most interesting animals in the region. Desert mule deer, or burro deer, are found in the canyons of the Colorado River below Boulder Dam. Its relative, the Rocky Mountain mule deer, lives on the high plateaus in the eastern portion of the area. Predatory animals are represented by coyotes, bobcats, and foxes. Coyotes may occasionally be seen in the daytime, but bobcats and foxes are rarely seen and then usually at night. The ringtail cat is also common in the area, but, like the fox, is seldom seen except at night. Jackrabbits are common in all parts of the area and cottontail rabbits along the streams and around the springs. The small rodents make up the bulk of the animal population and are a very interesting group for study. There are kangaroo rats with their long powerful hind legs for jumping, pocket mice with their cheek pouches for carrying food, pack or wood rats, white-footed

VISITORS OCCASIONALLY SEE THE WARY MOUNTAIN SHEEP IN THE CANYONS AND ON THE SLOPES LEADING TO THE LAKE'S EDGE.





WATER SPORTS ARE MANY AND VARIED.

or deer mice, ground squirrels, and other rodent forms. The little antelope ground squirrel is the one most commonly seen. This animal is often mistaken for the ordinary chipmunk, which it greatly resembles except that the under side of the ground squirrel's tail is white. Some of the ground squirrels and chipmunks may be tame. It is wisest to enjoy them without actual contact, however, for a few rodents have been known to carry dangerous diseases.

The list of birds for the area contains more than 200 different species which range in size from the tiny hummingbird to the majestic golden eagle. Since Lake Mead is the only large body of water within a radius of several miles, it is not surprising that more than 60 species of waterfowl and wading birds are found here. There are ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers, herons, terns, gulls,

sandpipers, plovers, stilts, and avocets, as well as many others. Twelve species of hawks and 4 species of owls, in addition to the golden eagle, make up the list of predatory birds. There is a long list of vireos, warblers, flycatchers, and sparrows, as well as other species. The birds found on the list represent not only year-round residents, but migrants and winter and summer residents.

Reptiles are represented by at least 17 different species of lizards, an equal number of snakes, and 2 species of turtles. The spotted toad is the most common among the 6 listed species of amphibians.

Lake Mead contains large-mouth black bass, bluegill, perch, and crappie. Rainbow trout have been planted in the Colorado River below Boulder Dam. Catfish and other common species are also present in the lake.

ADMINISTRATION

The National Park Service representative in direct charge of the Boulder Dam National Recreational Area is the superintendent, who is assisted by a force of rangers and naturalists. The Service's headquarters building is at the junction of Park Place and Park Street in Boulder City. Visitors are welcome.

HOW TO REACH THE AREA

By Motor.—U. S. Highway No. 91 between Salt Lake City and Los Angeles passes through Las Vegas and there connects with U. S. Highways Nos. 93 and 466, leading southeastward to Boulder City, Boulder Dam, and Kingman, Ariz. From Las Vegas it is 23 miles over paved road to Boulder City and 7 miles farther to Boulder Dam. U. S. Highway No. 66 between southern California and northern Arizona passes through Kingman, where connections may be made for the 72-mile drive to Boulder Dam, Lake Mead, and vicinity over U. S. Highways Nos. 93 and 466.

By Rail.—Travelers on the Union Pacific detrain at Las Vegas, and those on the Santa Fe detrain at Kingman. At both points they are met by scheduled stages for the trip to Boulder City.

By Bus.—At Las Vegas passengers on the Union Pacific stages and the Burlington Trailways buses are met by Union Pacific stages scheduled to Boulder City. At Kingman passengers on Greyhound Lines and Santa Fe Trailways buses may take the side trip to Boulder City on stages of the Phoenix-Kingman and Boulder City Lines.

By Air.—Transcontinental and Western Air, Inc., provides daily plane service to Boulder City and Las Vegas; United Air Lines and Western Air Express also serve Las Vegas.

WHERE TO STAY

A free public campground maintained by the National Park Service is available for both tent and trailer campers. It is located 5 miles from Boulder City on the shore of Lake Mead near the bathing beach and the boat landing. Included are modern comfort stations, tables, fireplaces, waste receptacles, and convenient water hydrants. In addition, electric hotplates and outlets operating on commercial meters are available for campers. Several hundred shade trees have been planted in the campground and in a few years will add to the attractiveness of this modern facility.

Excellent overnight accommodations operated by Grand Canyon-Boulder Dam Tours, Inc., are available at Hualapai Lodge, located between the public campground and the boat landing overlooking Lake Mead. Comfortably furnished rooms equipped with electric heating for winter and air cooling for summer, an excellent dining room, a small store, and lounge and recreation rooms are among the services afforded.

In Boulder City, hotel and auto-court accommodations are available. Several cafes serve good meals at reasonable prices. A tent-cabin lodge at Pierce Ferry is open from October 1 to June 1 and provides moderate rustic accommodations. A variety of accommodations is also available at Las Vegas, 23 miles from Boulder City, and at Kingman, Ariz., 79 miles from Boulder City.

WHAT TO DO

Natural Color Pictures accompanied by a talk given by a National Park Service naturalist on the attractions of this new playground are presented twice daily at 11 a. m. and 1:15 p. m. in the Boulder City Theater. No charge.

Free Motion Pictures of the construction of Boulder Dam are shown continuously from 7:30 a. m. to 9 p. m. daily in the Boulder Dam Service Bu-

reau located in the Boulder City Theater Building.

Free Museum of Natural History in the National Park Service Building in Boulder City is open daily from 8 a. m. to 5 p. m.

Swimming.—At the Hemenway Wash Beach near Boulder City free facilities include dressing rooms, lifeguard protection, floodlights in the evening, diving floats, etc. Suits may be rented at

the beach. Less complete facilities are also provided at the Overton, Nev., beach. The swimming season is from April 15 to November 1.

Boating.—More than 200 privately owned boats are now in use on Lake Mead. Boats must be registered with the National Park Service before being launched. The Grand Canyon-Boulder Dam Tours, Inc., maintains complete boat service from the rental of row-boats and outboard motors to regularly scheduled trips by larger cruisers and chartered trips.

The boat trip, leaving Hemenway Wash Boat Landing at 8 a. m., into the Grand Canyon can truly be called one of America's great water adventures. After covering approximately 180 miles round trip, which includes almost 2 hours spent in the magnificent Grand Canyon with its sheer mile-high walls rising precipitously from the shore of Lake Mead, the return to the boat landing is made by 5:30 p. m. A hostess accompanies the all-day trip to

answer questions, serve the lunches, and add to the passengers' comfort. The cost of this trip, including lunch, is \$10 a person. Children under 12 years of age, half fare. A minimum of 8 full fares is required to make the trip.

Fishing.—Lake Mead offers some of the finest bass fishing anywhere in the West. Large-mouth black bass ranging in weight up to 13 pounds have been caught. Annual non-resident license is \$3; 15-day tourist license is \$2. Boats, tackle, licenses, and fishing guides are available at the Hemenway Wash Boat Landing, and during the fall, winter, and spring also at the Overton Landing and at Pierce Ferry.

Motoring.—An interesting drive may be made to Overton, Nev., 89 miles from Boulder City, where there is a museum of archeology housing exhibits of ancient Indian artifacts excavated at the Lost City since inundated by the rising waters of Lake Mead. The return trip is through the brilliantly colored Valley of Fire.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

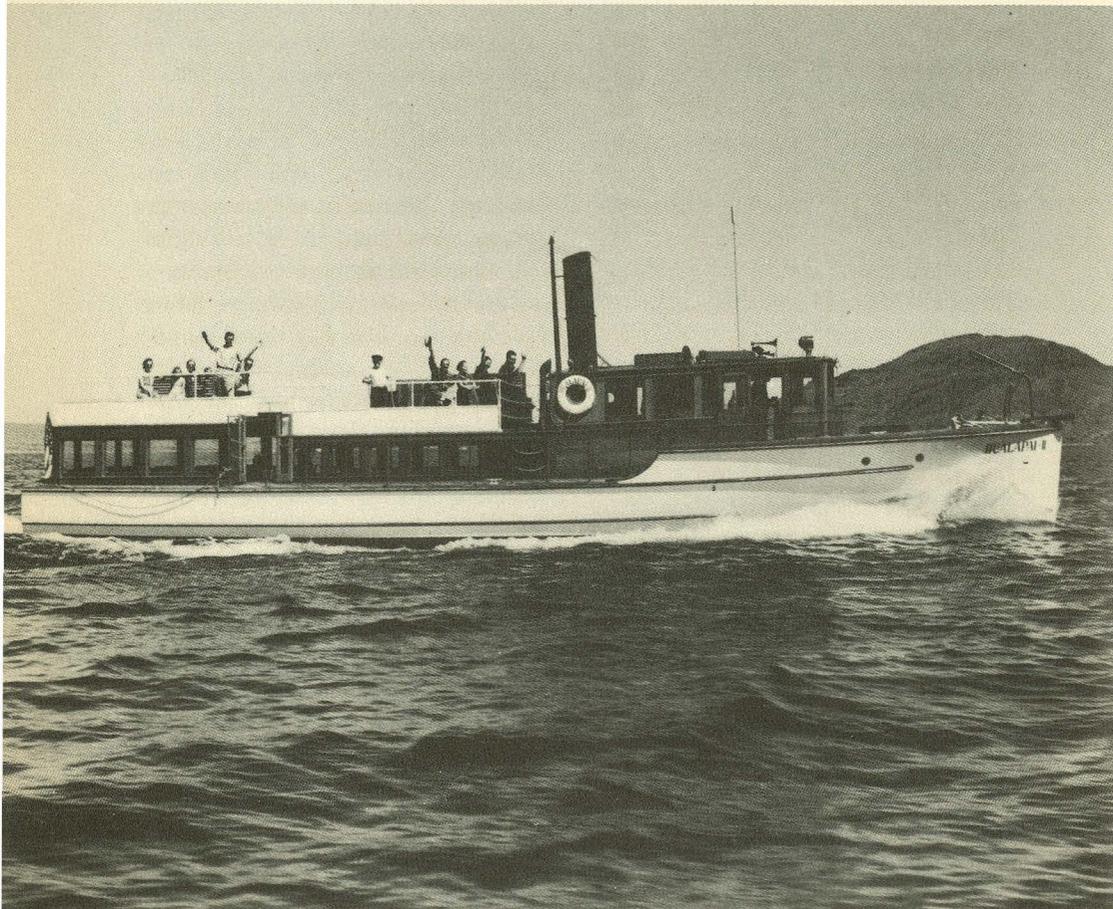
[Briefed]

*Let no one say, and say it to your shame,
That all was beauty here until you came.*

The area regulations are designed for the protection of the natural features, as well as for the comfort, convenience, and safety of visitors. Complete regulations from which this synop-

sis has been prepared may be procured at the superintendent's office or from any park ranger.

Campgrounds.—Automobile campers must stop in the designated campgrounds, except when it is necessary to camp elsewhere in connection with trips to isolated portions of the area. All



Erskine photo

VISITORS ENJOY BOTH SHORT AND ALL-DAY BOAT TRIPS ON LAKE MEAD.

camping spots must be kept clean and sanitary. Garbage and empty cans should be placed in garbage receptacles, or buried if no containers are provided. Camping is limited to 30 days in one season.

Public Property, Trees, Flowers, and Animals.—The destruction, injury, or disturbance of public property, vegetation, flowers, rocks, birds, animals, and other natural features is prohibited.

Fishing.—Nevada or Arizona fishing license is required in the area. Non-resident license at \$3, resident license at \$1.50, each State, good for calendar year, or special 15-day permit at \$2 can be procured. Copies of special fishing regulations applying to Lake Mead may be obtained from the superintendent's office in the National Park Service administration building in Boulder City, or from any park ranger.

Boating.—Private individuals may launch their boats on Lake Mead upon securing boat permit from the superintendent's office or from any park ranger at a cost of \$2 to \$5 the calendar year, depending upon the length and type of boat. Arrangements may be made with representatives of the area operator for mooring boats at a monthly charge determined by the length of such craft; or moorings which must be constructed in accordance with approved specifications obtainable from the superintendent's office may be provided by private boat owners who may then moor boats in areas designated by the superintendent.

Special regulations affecting safety, sanitation, navigation, and other phases of boating operation must be complied with.

Hunting.—Hunting within area boundaries is prohibited. Lake Mead and adjacent land also lie within the Boulder Canyon Wildlife Refuge administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior.

Dogs.—Dogs are not permitted to run at large in public campgrounds, on the beaches, in the vicinity of the boat landing, or in other places of visitor concentration.

Noises.—Persons in camp should be quiet after others have gone to bed. Most visitors come to the area for rest.

Lost and Found.—Persons finding lost articles should deposit them at the chief ranger's office in the National Park Service administration building located in Boulder City, or leave them with a park ranger.

Park Rangers.—The rangers are here to help and to advise you as well as to see that regulations are enforced. When in doubt, consult the rangers who are glad to be helpful at all times.

Suggestions and Comments.—Communications from visitors giving suggestions, favorable or unfavorable comments, or other reaction to area management and facilities are welcomed at all times. These should be addressed to the Superintendent, Boulder Dam National Recreational Area, Boulder City, Nev., or be delivered in person.